

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (currently amended) A method for performing a qualitative or quantitative assay for protein oxidation, comprising detecting, in a sample, an amino acid sequence in a free fragment form comprising sequence HRGYPGLDG (SEQ ID NO: 1) in which the amino acid residue Y is nitrated tyrosine; or an amino acid sequence in a free fragment form comprising sequence HRGYPGLDG (SEQ ID NO: 1) and a nitrated tyrosine ~~which is characteristic of a specific protein and which contains one or more aromatic amino acid residues in nitrated form.~~

Claim 2. (currently amended) The A-method as claimed in claim 1, conducted as an immunoassay, comprising detecting binding of an antibody immunological binding partner ~~which is immunoreactive with said nitrated tyrosine form of said aromatic amino acid residue.~~

Claim 3. (currently amended) The A-method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said immunological binding partner antibody is specifically reactive with said nitrated tyrosine form of said aromatic amino acid residue in the context that of said amino acid sequence which is specific to and uniquely identified with ~~characteristic of a specific protein.~~

Claim 4. (currently amended) The A-method as claimed in claim 2, wherein said immunological binding partner antibody is reactive with said nitrated tyrosine form of said aromatic amino acid residue in a context independent manner and said assay comprises detecting binding of both said immunological binding partner antibody and a second immunological binding partner antibody to nitrated amino acid sequences in a sandwich format, wherein said second immunological binding partner antibody has

binding specificity for an amino acid sequence which is specific to and uniquely identified with a characteristic of said specific protein.

Claim 5. (currently amended) The A-method as claimed in claim 1, wherein said ~~specific protein of which the detected nitrated~~ amino acid sequence is specific to and uniquely identified with ~~detected~~ is a mammalian protein.

Claim 6. (currently amended) The A-method as claimed in claim 5, wherein said protein is present in joint tissue.

Claim 7. (currently amended) The A-method as claimed in claim 6, wherein said protein is collagen of type I, II, III, VI, IX or XI, aggrecan, cartilage link protein, cartilage oligomeric protein, or cartilage intermediate layer protein.

Claims 8 – 26 (cancelled)